Geo-stories created by volcanic activities in the Kirishima Geopark, SW Japan

TORU ISHIKAWA - *The Council for the Promotion of the Kirishima Geopark, Japan <kiri-geopark@po.mct.ne.jp>*

If it were not for the peak, Takachihonomine volcano located at the eastern Kirishima Volcano Group (KVG), SW Japan would not become the object for people's faith. Considering that mountain worship is not seen in the western KVG where violent features of craters are conspicuous, the influence brought about by the beautiful shape of Takachihonomine volcano is obvious. Such an elegant appearance was formed by the cone-like lava dome covering the summit area.

If it were not for many craters, there would not be the variety of vegetation in the present KVG. Though each crater has been activated independently over the last decades in KVG, various stages of vegetation succession can be seen similarly in narrow areas. The 2011 eruption of Shimmoedake volcano newly brought about the opportunity for observing renewal vegetation succession after the eruption.

If it were not for the caldera-forming eruption, there would not be rural landscape at the Ebiono area, northern foot of KVG. Large-scale subsidence associated with the huge eruption made originally steep mountains into a vast basin suitable for cultivating rice. In addition to this topography, the abundant-water resource in the basin has also supported lives of people who live inside a caldera.

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